

What is claimed is:

1. A contents distribution system comprising:

5 a contents provider that comprises a contents server and a user information database and that distributes contents to a subscriber over a communication network, said contents server storing therein authored contents, said user information database having an area in which subscriber's contents download information and right information are recorded; and

10 a portable terminal player, owned by the subscriber, that comprises a recording medium playback function playing back the contents downloaded to a recording medium and a playback right return function returning a playback right back to said contents provider, said playback right allowing the subscriber to play back the downloaded contents,

15 wherein said contents provider manages contents distribution to the subscriber in such a way that, when the contents are distributed to said portable terminal player of the subscriber, said contents provider manages a number of downloads of the contents to the subscriber and, when the subscriber returns the playback right of the distributed contents back to said contents provider, said portable terminal player erases a key for playing back the contents and a file name recorded on the recording medium and, at the same time, returns the playback right to the area in which the right information is recorded in said user information database.

2. A contents distribution system comprising:

30 a contents provider that comprises a contents server and a user information database and that distributes contents to a subscriber over a communication network according to an SDMI (Secure Digital Music Initiative) check-in/check-out rule, said contents server storing therein authored contents, 35 said user information database having an area in which subscriber's contents download information and right

information are recorded; and

5 a portable terminal player, owned by the subscriber, that comprises a recording medium playback function playing back the contents downloaded to a recording medium and a check-in function returning a playback right back to said contents provider, said playback right allowing the subscriber to play back the downloaded contents,

10 wherein said contents provider manages contents distribution to the subscriber according to the SDMI check-in/check-out rule in such a way that, when the contents are distributed to said portable terminal player of the subscriber, said contents provider manages a number of check-outs of the contents to the subscriber and, when the subscriber checks in the distributed contents, said portable terminal player erases a key for playing back the contents and a file name and, at the same time, returns the playback right to the area in which the right information is recorded in said user information database.

20 3. A contents distribution system comprising:

25 a contents provider that comprises a contents server and a user information database and that distributes contents to a subscriber over a communication network and saves and distributes user-migrated contents into and from the contents server, said user information database having an area in which subscriber's contents download information and right information are recorded; and

30 a portable terminal player, owned by the subscriber, that comprises a recording medium playback function playing back the contents downloaded to a recording medium and a check-in function returning a playback right back to said contents provider, said playback right allowing the subscriber to play back the downloaded contents,

35 wherein, when the subscriber migrates ripped contents to the contents server of said contents provider from said portable terminal player according to an SDMI rule, said

contents provider manages a distribution of the migrated contents to the subscriber according to the SDMI check-in/check-out rule.

5 4. A contents distribution system comprising:

 a contents provider that comprises a contents server storing therein authored contents and that supplies the contents to a contents distributor;

10 the contents distributor that comprises a distribution contents server in which the contents supplied from said contents provider are stored and a user information database having an area in which subscriber's contents download information and right information are recorded and that distributes the contents to a subscriber; and

15 a portable terminal player, owned by the subscriber, that comprises a recording medium playback function playing back the contents distributed from said contents distributor and downloaded to a recording medium and a check-in function returning a playback right back to said contents distributor, 20 said playback right allowing the subscriber to play back the downloaded contents,

 wherein said contents distributor manages contents distribution from said distribution contents server to said portable terminal player according to an SDMI 25 check-in/check-out rule in such a way that, when the contents are distributed to said portable terminal player of the subscriber, said contents distributor manages a number of check-outs of the contents to the subscriber and, when the subscriber checks in the distributed contents to said contents 30 distributor, said portable terminal player erases a key for playing back the contents and a file name and, at the same time, returns the playback right to the area in which the right information is recorded in said user information database.

35 5. The contents distribution system according to claim 4, wherein the contents distributor further comprises a user

contents server in which contents ripped by the subscriber are stored and, when the subscriber directly transmits the contents to said user contents server while ripping and compressing the contents or migrates the contents that have 5 been recorded in the recording medium according to the SDMI rule, said contents distributor manages contents distribution from said user contents server to the subscriber's portable terminal player according to the SDMI check-in/check-out rule.

10 6. A contents distribution system comprising:
 a contents provider that comprises a contents server storing therein authored contents and that supplies the contents to a contents distributor;
 the contents distributor that comprises a distribution 15 contents server in which the contents supplied from said contents provider are stored and a user information database having an area in which subscriber's contents download information is stored;
 a general server that comprises a user contents server 20 in which the contents transmitted from said contents distributor or the contents ripped or moved by a subscriber are stored and a user information database having an area in which subscriber's right information is recorded and that distributes the contents from said user contents server to 25 a subscriber's portable terminal player; and
 the portable terminal player, owned by the subscriber, that comprises a recording medium playback function playing back the contents downloaded from said contents distributor or said general server to a recording medium and a check-in 30 function returning a playback right back to said general server, said playback right allowing the subscriber to play back the downloaded contents,
 wherein, when the contents purchased by the subscriber and downloaded to the recording medium are moved to the user 35 contents server of the general user according to an SDMI rule or when the subscriber directly transmits the contents to the

user contents server while ripping and compressing the contents or migrates the contents that have been recorded in the recording medium according to the SDMI rule, said general server manages contents distribution from said user contents 5 server to the subscriber's portable terminal player according to the SDMI check-in/check-out rule.

7. A portable terminal player that comprises a download function downloading contents to a recording medium, said 10 contents being distributed via a communication network, a recording medium playback function playing back the contents downloaded to the recording medium, and a playback right return function returning a playback right back to a distributor, said playback right allowing the subscriber to play back the 15 downloaded contents, wherein, when the playback right for playing back the contents recorded on the recording medium is returned, a key for playing back the contents and a file recorded on the recording medium are erased.

20 8. A contents provider that comprises a contents server storing therein authored contents and a user information database having an area in which subscriber's contents download information and right information are recorded, wherein, when the contents are distributed to a portable terminal player 25 of the subscriber, the distribution is managed according to a number of times the contents are distributed and a registration of a playback right returned from said portable terminal player to said user information database, or according to an SDMI check-in/check-out rule.

30 35 9. A contents provider that comprises a contents server and a user information database having an area in which subscriber's contents download information and right information are recorded, wherein a distribution of the contents to a portable terminal player of the subscriber and a saving of user's migrated contents to said contents server

as well as a distribution of the user's migrated contents back to said portable terminal player are performed according to an SDMI check-in/check-out rule.

With thanks, yours sincerely,
John Doe, PMP